

**PREPARED REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND TECHNOLOGY ANNUAL DINNER**

**“INTERNET WITHOUT BORDERS”**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.  
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Good evening.

For emceeding tonight and recording the new greeting on my voicemail, thank you Kojo Nnamdi.

I'm glad to be on the speaker's list with Undersecretary of State Robert Hormats and Representatives Stearns and Bono-Mack.

I'd like to welcome all the other members of Congress, the Administration and the FCC staff who are here, and I'm happy to be joining all of the above in congratulating Rick Boucher on his honor tonight.

If I could be forgiven a few words about our honoree.

In 28 years in the House, Rick Boucher set the standard of excellence for public service. Expert on complex issues, passionate about the opportunities of technology, working hard every day to build consensus, resist the temptations of partisanship, and get great things done for the American people. Thank you, Rick Boucher.

I could say many of the same things about CDT and its staff, trusted as an honest broker that can be counted on for expert analysis and advice.

Thank you to Leslie Harris for your outstanding leadership of CDT. Leslie's thoughtful, collaborative, and principled expertise on tech policy is invaluable

And thank you to Jerry Berman for your vision in creating CDT in 1994. Think about what the world was like when Jerry created CDT. No broadband, no Google, no Facebook, no Twitter, no smartphones or tablets. I was working at the FCC listening to Reed Hundt explain the future. Ok, not everything has changed.

By the way, as many of you know, Reed and the Aspen Institute have been doing very important work with the private and public sectors to establish principles ensuring free data flows around the world -- which brings us to tonight's theme: "Internet without Borders."

Leslie's always been one to go the extra mile, but encouraging two revolutions and multiple insurgencies to amplify tonight's theme is extraordinary even for her.

We've all been riveted by events in Egypt, Tunisia, and across the Middle East.

Make no mistake; these uprisings were driven by people. But it's equally clear that they were enabled and accelerated by technology.

Mobile phones and the Internet have proven to be game changers. Anyone with a cell phone and Internet connection can instantaneously become a citizen journalist – beaming images previously unseen to the world, opening up closed societies.

Social networking tools like Facebook and Twitter empower citizens and enable mass collaboration in unprecedented ways.

With the Internet, a 30-year-old Google employee in Dubai could use Facebook to call for a pro-democracy rally in Cairo. Of course, he did, and tens of thousands rallied. And made history.

The bold vision that inspired the creation and ongoing work of CDT is playing out before our very eyes – on our front pages, and on our screens. How many organizations can say that?

Of course, the Internet is not just a critical platform for free expression and spreading democracy, it's a platform for economic growth and opportunity in every country that embraces it.

And the Internet opens the doors to breakthroughs in education, health care, energy – a key to solving so many of the world's major challenges.

Everyone, everywhere can benefit from a vibrant global Internet that is free and open, that drives economic activity and innovation – an Internet without Borders.

I'm proud to join with groups like CDT to fight for Internet freedom. And we are fortunate to have a President and Secretary of State who have championed this cause.

Now, if we want people's right to Internet freedom protected around the world, of course we need to do the same here at home.

That's why last December the FCC adopted high-level rules of the road that enshrine basic Internet freedoms for online speakers, consumers, and innovators, while promoting innovation and private investment throughout the broadband economy, from apps to devices to networks.

I specifically want to thank CDT and their terrific team. You brought much needed light to this debate, helped craft a strong and smart framework, and we are all grateful for it.

An Internet without Borders is not just a vision for the world, it's a goal for the United States.

In fact, Internet without Borders could have been the title of the FCC's National Broadband Plan we issued last year.

What do I mean?

Here in the U.S., there are borders we need to overcome to harness the full opportunity of the internet, and to do so for all Americans.

There are borders separating those who have access to the Internet from those who do not.

Up to 24 million Americans live in communities, that simply lack broadband infrastructure.

And as the National Broadband Plan demonstrated, we have a rural-rural divide where we're spending too much in some areas, and spending and delivering too little in others.

Here in the U.S., there are borders separating those who have adopted broadband from those who haven't.

Roughly 33 percent of Americans are still offline – nearly 100 million people. That compares to an adoption rate in Singapore of over 90 percent.

The cost of this divide - the price of this border - is high and getting higher every day as our economy and society goes digital, as job postings, education and other essential services go online.

Another border is the one separating our mobile broadband aspirations from the mobile broadband reality rapidly heading our way.

This border is more of a wall. We're running out of spectrum to meet our mobile broadband needs and if we don't act we risk the opportunity to lead the world in mobile innovation.

To seize the full potential of the Internet, *all* of these borders must fall.

That's why at the FCC we're pursuing a strong and comprehensive agenda to unleash more spectrum for broadband, as recommended in the National Broadband Plan.

That's why we're modernizing the Universal Service Fund, so that we can convert an inefficient 20<sup>th</sup> century telephone program into an efficient and effective 21<sup>st</sup> century broadband program.

That's why we're removing barriers to broadband buildout. So communications infrastructure companies can build to more places, faster, and for lower cost.

That's why we're working to close the broadband adoption gap, tackling hard issues like digital literacy and affordability, and pushing to accelerate an e-government future.

All of these issues are essential. None should be partisan.

And across everything we do, we need to make sure that our policies, our actions and our spending are aligned with our country's 21<sup>st</sup> century priorities.

I believe we must – and, working together I believe we can -- build an Internet without borders abroad and at home. An Internet:

- Where any math wizard who goes to a school that doesn't have a calculus teacher, can take a class online at a school that does.
- Where a patient who lives 3 hours from the nearest specialist can still be treated in her hometown.
- Where a small business owner on Main Street can reach customers across town, across the country, or across the world.
- Where young people from Mississippi to Morocco can collaborate to promote mutual understanding, human rights, and peace.

Let me close where I began, with Egypt.

Built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the historic Library of Alexandria was Egypt's great gift to civilization – the ancient world's greatest cathedral of learning.

Throughout history, it was destroyed by vandals and conquerors, only to be rebuilt by the Egyptian people.

During the recent Egyptian protests, looting and violence broke out around the library. But Peaceful demonstrators joined hands and formed a human chain around the perimeter of the library, standing vigil, preserving the great library of Alexandria until the violence died down.

In modern times, it's the Internet that stands as the greatest wonder of the modern world, a beacon for knowledge and freedom, the great enabler of opportunity.

I'm proud to link arms with all of you to preserve this incredible gift to civilization, at home and abroad.